PRINCE ALBERT MUNICIPALITY

VIREMENT POLICY

MAY 2020

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1. Definitions

"Accounting officer" The municipal manager of a municipality is the accounting officer of the municipality in terms of section 60 of the MFMA

"Approved budget" means an annual budget approved by a municipal council

"Budget-related policy" means a policy of a municipality affecting or affected by the annual budget of the municipality

"Chief financial officer" means a person designated in terms of the MFMA who performs such budgeting, and other duties as may in terms of section 79 of the MFMA be delegated by the accounting officer to the chief financial officer

"Capital budget" this is the estimated amount for capital items in a given fiscal period. Capital items are fixed assets such as facilities and equipment, the cost of which is normally written off over a number of fiscal periods

"Council" means the council of a municipality referred to in section 18 of the Municipal Structures Act

"Financial year" means a 12- month year ending on 30 June

"Line item" an appropriation that is itemized on a separate line in a budget adopted with the idea of greater control over expenditures

"Operating budget" the town's financial plan, which outlines proposed expenditures for the coming financial year and estimates that revenues used to finance them

"Ring fenced" an exclusive combination of line items grouped for specific purposes for instance salaries and wages

"Service delivery and budget implementation plan" means a detailed plan approved by the mayor of a municipality in terms of section 53(1) (*c*) (ii) for implementing the municipality's delivery of municipal services and its annual budget

"Virement" is the process of transferring an approved budget allocation from one operating line item or capital project to another, with the approval of the relevant Manager. To enable budget managers to amend budgets in the light of experience or to reflect anticipated changes

"Vote" means of the main segments into which a budget of a municipality id divided for the appropriation of funds for the different departments or functional areas of the municipality; and which specifies the total amount that is appropriated for the purpose of the department or functional area concerned.

2. Abbreviations

CFO- Chief Financial Officer
IDP- Integrated Development Plan
MFMA- Municipal Finance Management Act
SDBIP- Service Delivery and budget implementation plan
CM- Council Minute/'s

3. Objective

To allow flexibility in the use of budgeted funds to enable management to act on occasions such as disasters, unforeseen expenditure or savings, etc. as they arise to accelerate service delivery in a financially responsible manner.

4. Virement Clarification

Virement is the process of transferring budgeted funds from one-line item number to another, with the approval of the relevant Manager and CFO, to enable budget managers to amend budgets in the light of experience or to reflect anticipated changes. (Section 28 (2) (c) MFMA)

5. Financial Responsibilities

Strict budgetary control must be maintained throughout the financial year in order that potential overspends and / or income under-recovery within individual vote departments is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. (Section 100 MFMA)

The Accounting Officer has a statutory obligation to ensure that adequate policies and procedures are in place to ensure an effective system of financial control. The budget virement process is one of these controls. (Section 27(4) MFMA)

It is the responsibility of each manager or head of a department or activity to which funds are allocated, to plan and conduct assigned operations so as not to expend more funds than budgeted. In addition, they have the responsibility to identify and report any irregular or fruitless and wasteful expenditure in terms of the MFMA sections 78 and 102.

6. Virement Restrictions

a. No funds may be vired between Directorates.

b. Accumulated virements may not exceed a maximum 10% of the total approved operating expenditure of a Directorate's budget.

c. A virement may not create new policy, significantly vary current policy, or alter the approved outcomes / outputs as approved in the IDP for the current or subsequent years. (Section 19 and 21 MFMA)

d. Virements resulting in adjustments to the approved SDBIP need to be submitted with an adjustment budget to the Council with altered outputs and measurements for approval. (MFMA Circular 13 page 3 paragraph 3)

e. No virement may commit the Municipality to increase expenditure, which commits the Council's recourses in the following financial year.

f. No virement may be made where it would result in over expenditure. (Section 32 MFMA)

g. No virement shall add to the organogram of the Municipality or increase personnel expenditure.

h. If the virement relates to an increase in the work force establishment, then the Council's existing recruitment policies and procedures will apply.

i. Virements may not be made in respect of ring-fenced allocations.

j. Budget may not be transferred from Interdepartmental cost, Capital Financing, Depreciation, Impairment, Interest charges, Contributions, Conditional Grants (except where specific in the relevant conditional grant framework), Bulk Purchases, Insurance, VAT or Income Forgone.

k. Virements may only be transferred from salaries if approved by the CFO.

l. Virements of capital budget allocations are only permitted within specified action plans and not across funding sources and must in addition have comparable asset lifespan classifications.

m. No virements are permitted in the first three and last six months of the financial year.

n. No virement proposal shall affect amounts to be paid to another Department without the agreement of the Manager of that Department, as recorded on the signed virement form. (Section 15 MFMA)

o. Virement amounts may not be rolled over to subsequent years, or create expectations on following budgets. (Section 30 MFMA)

p. An approved virement does not give expenditure authority and all expenditure resulting from approved virements must still be subject to the procurement / supply chain management policy of Council as periodically reviewed.

q. Virements may not be made between Expenditure and Income.

7. Virement Procedure

a. All virement proposals must be completed on the appropriate documentation and forwarded to the Chief Finance Officer for checking and implementation.

b. All virements must be signed by the Vote holder (per department) and the Manager within wich the vote is allocated. (Section 79 MFMA)

c. A virement form must be completed for all Budget Transfers.

d. All virements require the approval of the CFO and the Municipal Manager. (Section 79 MFMA)

e. Virements must be include as changes to the SDBIP.

f. All documentation must be in order and approved before any expenditure can be committed or incurred. (Section 79 MFMA)